Camden Town to Kings Cross (along the Regent Canal) – Photo walk

Laid out as a residential district from 1791 and originally part of the manor of Kentish Town and the parish of St Pancras. It became an important location during the early development of the railways, which reinforced its position on the London canal network. The area's industrial economic base has been replaced by service industries such as retail, tourism and entertainment. The area now hosts street markets and music venues that are strongly associated with alternative culture.

The walk started from Camden Town underground station on Camden High Street pass the Electric Ballroom

The Electric Ballroom on Camden High St has been a night club since the 1950s. A weekend market had been operating here for at least 24 years but it was closed at short notice in 2015.

Inverness Street Market (Oldest market)
A small century-old food street market that once had many stalls selling fresh produce and foodstuffs, unlike the other markets. In 1974 a small weekly crafts market that operated every Sunday near Camden Lock developed into a large complex of markets. The traditional market started losing stalls once local supermarkets opened and by mid-2013 all the original stalls had gone, being replaced by stalls similar to those of the other markets, including fast food but not produce. This leaves Queen's Crescent market in Kentish Town as the closest comparable market.

Buck Street Market: 'The Camden Market' (closed down)
An outdoor market focusing on clothes. There is no formal or legal definition of Camden Market; the Buck Street Market's sign read 'The Camden Market'. A few stallholders designed their own wares, while at the weekend these designs were more likely to be found in the Electric Ballroom market. Camden Market closed at the end of Sept 2019 to accommodate the renovation of Camden Town tube station. As a result of this renovation a new Buck Street market based on using old shipping container has been built and opened in March 2020.
Camden High Street
**Hawley Crescent (off of Camden High Street)** – Has a very unusual building which changes colour depending on the angle you look at it from.

**Camden Markets**

These are a number of adjoining markets, collectively referred to as "Camden Market" or "Camden Lock", located in the historic former Pickfords stables, in Camden Town north of the Hampstead Road Lock of the Regent's Canal (often referred to as Camden Lock). Famed for their cosmopolitan image, products sold on the stalls include crafts, clothing, bric-a-brac, and fast food (London’s 4th most popular visitor’s attraction, approximately 250,000 people each week). In 2014 Israeli billionaire Teddy Sagi started buying property in the Camden Market area. By March 2015, having purchased the 4 most important of the 6 sections of the market, he announced plans to invest £300million in developing the market area by 2018.

North London line railway bridge over Chalk Farm Road from Camden Lock Place, a pedestrian-only road with open-air and permanent stalls, and entrances to some Camden markets prior to its redevelopment.

The new entrance to the Markets beside the Railway Bridge March 2020
Camden Lock Village
Camden Lock Village was the section along the canal to the east of Chalk Farm Road was known as the Canal Market and had a covered entrance tunnel leading into a general outdoor market. The market was devastated by fire on 9 February 2008 caused by unauthorised use of a liquified petroleum gas heater. After crossing the railway line, the fire badly damaged the rear of the Hawley Arms on Castlehaven Road. The market reopened in May 2009 as the Camden Lock Village. The cover over the original street entrance was removed, and a new entrance created near the railway bridge.

Camden Lock Village and Camden Market from Camden High St and from Hawley Lock demolished in early 2015 to be redeveloped as Hawley Wharf

Camden Lock Market
Situated by the Regent's Canal on a site formerly occupied by warehouses and other premises associated with the canal. By the early 1970s the canal trade had ceased and a northern urban motorway was planned cutting through the site, making any permanent redevelopment impossible. In 1974 a temporary market was established by 1976, plans for the motorway were abandoned and the market had become a well-known feature of Camden Town. Originally, the Lock was a market for crafts, occupying outdoor areas by the canal and various existing buildings. The range of goods has widened, with stalls selling books, new & second-hand clothing, and jewellery, the Lock retains its focus as the principal Camden market for crafts. There is a selection of fast food stalls. In 1991 a 3-storey indoor market hall was opened on the site of the first outdoor market. In the style of the traditional 19th century industrial architecture and housing in the area, it is built of brick and cast iron.

On 28 February 1993, the Provisional IRA exploded a bomb hidden in a litter bin on Camden High Street near the market, shortly after lunchtime. The bomb injured 11 people.
From 2006, a large indoor market hall was constructed in a yard between the Camden Lock Market and the Stables Market that was previously used for open air stalls. In November 2007 a large part of the Stables Market was demolished as part of a long-term redevelopment plan for the area and rebuilt as a year-round permanent market area.

**Stables Market**

It’s located in the historic former Pickfords stables and has a Grade II listed horse hospital which served the horses pulling Pickford’s along the canal. Many of the stalls and shops are set in large arches in railway viaducts. It the main focus for furniture in decorative, ethically-hand items or 20th century crafted, are among the wares. In the summer of 2007 the Stables Market took place of 2 new four-storey buildings offices, workshops and storage exhibition space.

Redevelopment included a new pedestrian route through the rear of the Stables Market exposing 25 of the existing railway arches. Pedestrian walkways in the style of the existing historic ramp, bridge system and a glass roof has opened up the site and increased access for visitors. On 19 May 2014, at around 8:00pm, a fire broke out at the Camden Stables Market where a reported 10 fire engines and 70 firefighters dealt with the blaze. No injuries were reported and the London Fire Brigade had the fire had been controlled since 9:00pm.
The Markets
The Markets

What’s through that the Door? A Vagina Museum!

Nostalgia

Hans  Gretel  Amy Whitehouse
Lunch Time

Regents Canal towards Regent Park and Little Venice

Hampstead Road Locks (known locally as Camden Locks) from Crossover Bridge looking towards Kings Cross
Regent Canal – Camden Lock to Kings Cross
From the Markets we continued our photo walk along the canal towpath passing the Kentish Town Locks going under Kentish Town Road Bridge until we reach Camley Street Bridge

Kentish Town Locks

Grand Union Walk Housing

Camden Road Bridge
Dredged from the Canal

An Unusual Craft

Amazing what you can fish out of a Canal
Having passed under Camley Street Bridge and the railway bridge that serve St Pancras Station we reached St Pancras Lock & Basin with its traditional canal lock cottages as well as Gasholder Park the regenerated Coal Drop Yard and Camley Street Nature Reserve.

History of the Gasholders at King’s Cross: the iconic structures were built in the 1850s as part of Pancras Gasworks. The gasholders remained in use until the late 20th Century and were finally decommissioned in 2000. Gasholders No. 8, together with 10, 11 and 12 were dismantled and shipped piece by piece to Shepley Engineers in Yorkshire. It took 2 years to restore Gasholder No. 8, and in 2013 it returned to King’s Cross and was rebuilt piece-by-piece in its new home on the banks of the canal as part of the regeneration of King’s Cross.
There were two Victorian coal drops sheds (built in 1851 & 1860) used to receive coal from South Yorkshire and trans-ship it to narrowboats on the Regents Canal and to horse-drawn carts; they processed 8m tonnes a year. Coal was the only form of energy available to heat and light the buildings of London, either directly or after having been converted to coal gas in the adjacent gas works. Coal use was challenged by electricity, and electricity prevailed. The arches were used as stabling for some of the Great Northern's large stock of horses. There were 200 horses in 1850, and 867 in 1867, eventually rising to 1500. The horses were well stabled, and the company had its own farriers and a horse infirmary.

Coal Drop Yard March 2020 Part of the Kings Cross Regeneration

Camley Street Natural Reserve was also created from an old Coal Yard in 1984 and provides a home for birds, butterflies, bats and a wide variety of plant life. Habitats include wetlands, woodland and meadow. Unfortunately, it was closed due to reconstruction work.

Any one need a haircut?

London’s only Floating Book Barge
Our Photo walk came to an end at Battlebridge Basin situated next to Kings Cross Station. This is home to the Canal Trust Museum which tells the story of London's canals, their people, horses, boats and cargoes, in a waterside building dating from the 1860s, when it was built as an ice warehouse. There are 2 large underground ice wells under the ground floor with one you can look into. It covers canal life, the ice trade, the tradition of "roses and castles" canal art, the history of the Regent's Canal, the horses that pulled boats and ice carts, and how canals work and are supplied with water.

Battlebridge Basin and Canal Museum

King’s Cross has been a place of trade since Roman times. From 1820 until the 1960s the Regent’s Canal played an important role linking King’s Cross to industrial cities in Northern England and brought coal, goods & building materials to London for over 140 years.

Queen's Crescent Market (approx. 0.6 miles north of Camden Lock) – Not Visited

One of London's oldest street markets, and is open Monday to Saturday on Queen's Crescent in Kentish Town, Camden. The market sells food, discounted clothing and a wide variety of household products. In 2013 it was reported to have capacity for more than 90 stalls. Many traders run stalls that have been passed from generation to generation. This is in contrast to the more famous Camden markets nearby, which primarily attract tourists and those from other parts of London (Inverness Street Market was a traditional produce market off Camden High St for a century, but in 2013 the last produce stall closed, leaving only tourist stalls like other Camden markets). Aesthetically Queen's Crescent market is a mixture, with pretty plain white house’s sitting side by side with large council estates, some of which sit in beautifully landscaped grounds.